

# IMPROVING TRANSPORTATION

**D**espite a heavy financial loss from the elimination of car tab taxes for Metro and county roads, King County has used flexibility and creativity to restore lost service and improve transportation in King County.

**Better traffic signaling** – Metro is partnering with numerous cities to coordinate and synchronize traffic lights, contributing to the metropolitan area being ranked as one of this nation's most improved at congestion management by the Texas Transportation Institute.

**Smarter, faster road building** – As population densities increase, so has the demand for street improvements. In 1998, Executive Sims announced a flexible-budgeting plan to get road projects off the shelf and built more quickly. The new budgeting strategy has allowed the Road Services Division to more than triple its project design and construction.

**Better roads for a better environment** – Executive Sims led the county in an initiative to build and maintain roads in ways that



are both good for motorists and good for fish. Smarter management practices protect wetlands, and innovations in maintenance reduce the amount of roadway sediments and pollutants getting into streams. These practices are a statewide model.

**Metro Transit**  
— reducing  
congestion —  
safely and  
reliably.

**More buses, more often** – King County Metro has increased bus service by a total of 293,940 hours since 2000. The agency continues to work closely with Sound Transit, Community Transit, Pierce Transit and the Washington State Ferries to efficiently connect riders from their homes to their jobs via a coordinated regional transportation network.



***Paving the way to transportation solutions.***



***Making it easier to get to the bus*** – King County has added several thousand park and ride stalls since 1998. Public/private partnerships are developing housing and retail space at several facilities to take advantage of this increasingly convenient transit service.

***A leaner, greener bus fleet*** – 212 highly efficient hybrid diesel-electric buses are on our roads today, making King County the nation's largest user of the cutting-edge transit technology. They are far less polluting and more energy efficient than their retiring predecessors. Metro also began fueling the fleet with a blend of five percent biodiesel and 95 percent ultra-low sulfur fuel last year, providing the tipping point for economic viability of fuel-producing seed crops.

***Leading a 'hybrid' nation*** – King County has become nationally recognized as a leader in the use of hybrid and alternative vehicles for use by government agencies. Now, King County is sharing that knowledge as the "lead public agency" for a consortium of agencies for the procurement of hybrid electric vehicles. This effort will spread the use of hybrid vehicles and drive down their cost.

***More ways to get there*** – When no one else was willing to save Sound Transit, Executive Sims volunteered to lead the turnaround of

the troubled agency and helped win the federal approval of the light rail project that broke ground in 2003. Light rail will link downtown Seattle to the Rainier Valley, Tukwila, and the airport.

***A growing airport*** – King County International Airport (KCIA) at Boeing Field has grown in importance to the business and economy of the region. KCIA has approximately 500 cargo aircraft operations every week, ranking it 35th among all airports nationally in terms of total landed weight. In 2001, the National Air Transportation Association selected KCIA as one of the "100 Most Needed Airports in the United States."



***A new hybrid bus — increasing service, decreasing pollution.***



***Metro Transit links north and south King County while integrating with both the community and the environment.***

***Kenmore Park-and-Ride.***

